

Message Text

SECRET

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R 141314Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3737
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T DOHA 797

EXDIS

ABU DHABI PASS DUBAI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TC, IR
SUBJECT: POLITICAL TENSIONS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

REF: (A) ABU DHABI 1666 (B) TEHRAN 5512

1. I COMMEND THOUGHTFUL AND DISPASSIONATE ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS
BESETTING THE U.A.E. CONTAINED IN REF A. AND I CERTAINLY CONCUR
WITH AMBASSADOR DICKMAN IN FINDING THAT SNAANDAJI'S ATTITUDE
(REF B) REFLECTS A WOEFUL LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF U.A.E. SCENE.

2. WITH APOLOGIES TO EMBASSY TEHRAN, IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY'S
DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ASIA AND AFRICA AFFAIRS SANANDAJI IS NOT,
IN MY VIEW, A PERSON OF BALANCED VIEWS ON ARAB AFFAIRS. AT LEAST
I FOUND THIS TO BE THE CASE WHEN I KNEW HIM SOME YEARS AGO IN
TEHRAN. HE IS NOT IN ANY CASE NOTABLE FOR SUBTLETY OF MIND OR
SENSITIVITY OF UNDERSTANDING. THIS IS MOST UNFORTUNATE GIVEN

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SANANDAJI'S HIGH ADVISORY POSITION. AS A KURD FROM IRANIAN
KURDISTAN, SANANDAJI USED TO FEEL PERSONALLY THE CUREL REPRESSION
OF THE IRAQI ARMY AGAINST ITS OWN KURDS IN THE EARLY 1970S.
SANANDAJI WAS ALSO BURDENED WITH FEELINGS OF IRANIAN CULTURAL
SUPERIORITY OVER THE ARABS. ABOUT THE ONLY ARAB I EVER HEARD HIM
MENTION FAVORABLY WAS KING HUSSEIN, AND THAT SEEMED MAINLY DUE TO
HUSSEIN'S ROYAL POSITION.

3. AMBASSADOR DICKMAN'S POINT IS PARTICULARLY WELL TAKEN THAT STAKING OUT PARTISAN POSITIONS ON BEHALF OF ONE OR MORE OF THE EMIRATES, AS SANANDAJI DOES ON BEHALF OF DUBAI AND SHEIKH RASHID, IS NOT LIKELY TO ADVANCE CAUSE OF U.A.E. UNITY. IN FACT, THE OPPOSITE MAY BE THE CASE AND ONE WONDERS IF SHEIKH RASHID'S SOMETIMES HARD-NOSED ATTITUDE MIGHT NOT BE LESS SO IF HE DID NOT PERHAPS FEEL HE HAD BIG BROTHER IRAN HOVERING NEARBY IN SUPPORT. ASSUMING AS I DO THAT IRAN HAS NO INTENTION OF GETTING MILITARILY INVOLVED IN ANY FUTURE INTERNAL SHOVING MATCH IN THE U.A.E., ANY APPEARANCE OF UNDUE IRANIAN ARDOR FOR RASHID COULD HAVE PERNICIOUS CONSEQUENCES.

4. MEANWHILE, THE QATARIS ARE NOT GIVEN TO TALKING VERY MUCH, BUT I SENSE REAL CONCERN IN DOHA OVER POSSIBILITIES THAT THE U.A.E. COULD BREAK UP. AN EQUAL OR EVEN GREATER CONCERN EXISTS FOR THE STABILITY OF IRAN. THIS HAS BEEN A RECURRING SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION OF BOTH QATARIS AND EXPATRIATES AT RECENT SOCIAL FUNCTIONS HERE. THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT ADMIRATION FOR THE SHAH OR FOR AMIR ZAYID, BUT RATHER A SOPHISTICATED UNDERSTANDING THAT SOMETHING NEAR CHAOS COULD RESULT IN THE GULF IF POLITICAL STABILITY BREAKS DOWN IN IRAN OR IN THE U.A.E.

KILLGORE

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NNN

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